THE BRITISH COLUMBIAN DISPUTE.

[*Pall Mall Gazette, Sept.* 22.]

The issues of the controversy between the Dominion of Canada and British Columbia have been made sufficiently plain to the public; nor is there any reason to doubt that their gravity has been fully appreciated by the Colonial Office. At the same time it is evident that the Imperial Government can only proceed with great caution in urging the Canadians to carry out their pledge to the Pacific Settlements. The Act of Union of 1867 placed the Dominion in something like the position of an independent Power, and Canadian politicians are not slow to assert their right to shape a policy of their own. Only a few months ago Mr. Mackenzie, the Premier of the Dominion, in addressing his constituents at Sarnia, went out of his way to assert with great clearness and emphasis the advancement of Canadian pretentions. He said:—"One of our early struggles in this country was to get Canadian affairs managed by Canadians, and not to have a Colonial Office or a Colonial Secretary undertaking to dictate through an irresponsible Council in Canada what laws should be enacted or what policy should be adopted. That has all been gained, and so far as the management of our own internal affairs is concerned there is nothing left in dispute." And he went on to claim for the Ottawa Government a similar independence in the practical if not the formal conduct of negotiations with the United States, should any difficulties arise between the Dominion and its neighbors. This part of policy Mr. Mackenzie asserts, "does not concern any other portion of the British public;" and he hints that interference on the part of the mother country would be sharply resented. If we apply the principles and the sentiments on which Mr. Mackenzie rests his case to the British Columbia controversy, it is easy to perceive the obstacles to direct Imperial action for securing the rights of the Pacific colonists are very formidable. The Act of Union speaks of "Terms and conditions" of Confederation, but does not provide any machinery for enforcing the performance of those terms and conditions against the will of the Executive Government of the Dominion and of the majority in the Ottawa Parliament. Moreover, those agreements generally have reference to expenditure of money; and appropriations to meet this expenditure must be granted in the usual way by the House of Commons. Even in this country, where the Government is in direct relations with the Legislature the latter might refuse to provide the means for carrying out a public contract, and the *former could only appeal to the honor of the nation at large to wipe away the stain of such a breach of faith.* But the Imperial Government dealing with a colonial Parliament, has no possibility of

finding such a remedy. When the Canadian Parliament declines to give effect to the bargain with British Columbia, and the refusal is acquiesced in by the Dominion Ministry, the mother country cannot even cause the question to be remitted to the constituencies. The jealousy of Imperial interference to which Mr. Mackenzie gives such energetic expression would be aroused, beyond all question, were the Governor-General to be directed by the Colonial Office to dissolve the House of Commons at Ottawa against the advice of his "responsible Ministers." Were even such an expedient—for which there is no recent precedent—possible, it would fail of attaining its object. It is to be feared that the Canadian Conservatives are as little prepared as Mr. Mackenzie's followers to do plain justice to the people of British Columbia, so that a dissolution and a change of Administration would probably effect no more than an alteration in the methods of evasion. Unfortunately, too, the Senate at Ottawa, which is the body directly responsible for the rejection of the "Carnarvon Compromise," consists of members nominated for life, and so long as the majority in this branch of the Legislature remains opposed to the execution of the contract the dead-lock will continue..

It is not, therefore, to the direct compulsion of the Imperial Government that British Columbia can look for the removal of the grievances of which she justly complains, and the text of the address of the Pacific colonists to Lord Dufferin shows that no such illusion is cherished. The address summarizes the controversy with Canada; pointing out that the "many and urgent representations" of British Columbia with respect to "the unfulfilled terms of Confederation, resulting in certain recommendations by the Earl of Carnarvon, which were accepted by the Dominion Government as a solution of the difficulty, and that these recommendations were favorable to the Dominion Government, as they would, if carried out, have relieved it from those conditions of the original terms of Confederation which were considered by the Dominion Government impossible of fulfilment." But the address proceeds, "instead of the Dominion of Canada attempting to fulfil these modified obligations in a *bona fide* manner, she utterly neglected to do so, and in lieu thereof offered a pecuniary compensation to this Province in an ambiguously worded document. This offer was declined by the Provincial Government, and its action was endorsed in the strongest manner by the people." The danger that a sense of wrong originating in this repeated breach of faith may lead to serious political consequences is temperately set forth by the Pacific colonists. It is asserted that "the action of the Dominion Government in ignoring the Carnarvon settlement has produced a widespread feeling of dissatisfaction towards Confederation, which has been intensified by the utterances of prominent public men of the Dominion, who apparently look upon this Province as a source of expense and trouble to the Dominion, and as a Province whose withdrawal would not be regretted." This is perfectly true. Mr. Mackenzie himself has spoken as if the connection with British Columbia were an embarrassing and unprofitable one. Mr. Blake, the present Minister of Justice, has openly declared that if the Pacific Province will not be content with what Canada chooses to give her, she had better go out of the Union; and Sir Alexander Galt, as prominent on the Conservative side as Mr. Blake is among the Liberals, has explicitly endorsed this policy. What wonder if the result has followed which the address

notes as a warning? If, it is said, the Canadian Government "fail to take practical steps to carry into effect the terms solemnly accepted by them, we most respectfully inform your Excellency that, in the opinion of a large number of people of this Province, the withdrawal of this Province from the Confederaiion will be the inevitable result; and in such case compensation from the Dominion would be demanded for the unfulfiled obligations which she undertook. This growing desire for separation is not held out as a threat, but is simply the expression of a feeling which is gaining strength every day. The knowledge that Canada relies on the paucity of our numbers, and her own power to fulfil or repudiate the terms of the Union as she pleases, creates a feeling of irritation which is being continually augmented." The Canadians unluckily, do not scruple to say that these small communities must yield as anti-Unionists of Nova Scotia were forced to yield to the will of the more powerful provinces. They know that secession from the Union would leave the Pacific settlers, as the address describes them, in a perilous and painful situation:—"Bounded as this Province is, on the north and south by United States territories, and without railway connection with the Dominion of Canada, British Columbia will ever be an isolated, unprogressive Province. The railway and other facilities of the American people are sapping our trade and directing commerce and population to their shores." Yet in justice to the loyalty of the British Columbians it must be said they do not even glance at the possibility of annexation, though they call Lord Dufferin's attention to the amazing progress made in the Far West of the Union by the development of the railway system.

Still, although annexation remains a word unspoken, it is not less certainly in men's thoughts, and as a possibility it must enter into the reckonings of Imperial statesmanship. It is impossible to admit the pretention of the Dominion Government that this is merely a Canadian question, and that it must be settled as between the Parliament of Ottawa and a few thousand settlers in British Columbia. The Pacific Province is equal in area to the German Empire; its ports are upon the most direct line between Europe and the Far East, Victoria, the chief town of Vancouver's Island, is no more than twenty-one days' sail from Hong Kong, and it has been calculated that, were the Trans-Continental Railway opened, the communication between Southampton and the Chinese ports might be shortened by fifteen or twenty days. At any rate, the time must come when the trade of these Pacific colonies with Japan and China will become a most important element in the world's commerce; and the childish narrow-minded trickery of the Canadians is unconsciously diverting this future stream of wealth and power from the British Empire to the American Republic. Isolated and hopeless, British Columbia would be likely to look to annexation for a new career, and the Americans who hem in our colony between Oregon and Alaska may be tempted to accept the invitation of those adventurous spirits who recognize no established allegiance, and whose flag is planted for them by commercial interest. If the Canadians can afford to disregard these obvious considerations, Imperial statesmanship cannot; and though, as we have said, the mother country cannot enforce the performance of the contract by constitutional methods, the power of public opinion, expressed with moderation, but also with firmness, by the Colonial Office,

may bring the Ministers of the Dominion to a sense of their wider and higher duties. It is not too much to say that if Canada refuses to behave with common honesty in carrying out a clear contract, she will be guilty of disloyalty to the Empire, as well as of the more vulgar offence.

THE LONDON "STANDARD" ON BRITISH COLUMBIA AFFAIRS.

Mr. Mackenzie's Government, says the *Standard*, must be by this time convinced that the public opinion of the Mother Country, expressed with a decision and a unanimity most uncommon upon colonial questions is opposed to the vacillating and tortuous policy which has been pursued towards British Columbia. It is now more than two years since we first called attention to the course which the so-called "Liberal" or "Grit" Ministry were pursuing in regard to the project of the Canadian Pacific Railway—to the shuffling and time-serving devices which were being resorted to in order to evade the fulfilment of a bargain to which the honor of England was pledged, and to delay the execution of a work absolutely necessary in order to secure the integrity and the independence of the Dominion. We charged the Mackenzie Ministry with studying rather their own political convenience in the manner they make use of Canadian capital and Canadian credit than the welfare of the Confederation and the Imperial interests. We spoke of their policy as "a challenge to secession," as calculated to "loosen the newly-formed bonds of Canadian unity, and to injure the Dominion in its relations to the Empire." In return we received a great deal of bad language, and were told that we were actuated by "Tory prejudices" against the best of Ministries. We were informed that the Pacific Railway was being pushed forward as fast as was consistent with political purity in the Dominion, and that if the bargain with British Columbia could not be literally fulfilled it was because of its "physical impracticability." Since then the terms of that bargain have been greatly modified. A compromise was agreed to in 1874, at the instance of Lord Carnarvon, by which British Columbia agreed to waive its demand for a strict performance of the contract of 1871—the contract on the strength of which she was induced to enter the Dominion—in consideration of a certain new undertaking on the part of Canada. The terms of this new compact, as arranged by Lord Carnarvon and accepted by Canada, were five. The first

was that a railway between Esquimalt harbor and Nanaimo, Vancouver Island, should be commenced as soon as possible, and completed with all practicable despatch; the 2nd that the surveys for the mainland line should be vigorously prosecuted; the 3rd that a waggon-road and telegraph line should be constructed immediately along the route of the proposed railway; the 4th that at least two millions of dollars should be spent every year within the Province of British Columbia from the date when the surveys should be sufficiently advanced to admit of that expenditure on the construction of the railway; and the last that on or before the 31st of December, 1890, the whole line from the Pacific to the present furthest western point of the Canadian railway system should be completed and open for traffic. Considering that according to the original contract the Pacific Railway was to have been completed in 1881, it will be generally allowed that these terms involve a very great relaxation of the bond on the faith of which British Columbia was tempted to enter the North American Confederation. To a certain extent, however, the pleas advanced by Canada for the non-fulfilment of her bargain were admitted to be reasonable. If it was "physically impracticable," as Mr. Mackenzie urged, to construct the railway within the stipulated term, there was nothing more to be said. No one in this country, nor, as we believe, in British Columbia, had any idea of keeping Canada to the strict letter of her bond if the doing so involved the crippling of her own finances. It may be that the original contract was somewhat rashly entered into, and that Canada, as young countries are wont to do, promised more than she had any reasonable prospect of performing. The construction of a railway from sea to sea upon British territory, however important as a means of welding the Dominion together, was not the only object to be considered. If in the process of cementing the union we ruined its most important member, the result could hardly be satisfactory from an Imperial point of view. Justice and good policy alike demanded that the terms of the contract of 1871 should be liberally interpreted—that Canada should not be asked to bear a burden disproportionate to her strength—that British Columbia should not be forced into a premature development at the expense of her neighbors. All these considerations we cannot doubt were well weighed by Lord Carnarvon when he proposed the compromise of 1874. What we have to complain of now is, that not only have the terms even of that modified contract not been complied with, but that no attempt whatever appears to have been made to comply with them. While we find the Mackenzie Government energetic enough in pushing forward public works within those Provinces where it is most essential that its political interest is to be maintained, and prepared to enter into new engagements with the United States, involving the expenditure of a large sum of money, we do not see any sign whatever of a desire to comply with the terms of the Carnarvon compromise. The pretence that the Dominion Upper House rejected that compromise Mr. Mackenzie's own followers can scarcely regard as serious. In the majority of two by which the bill was defeated there were several of Mr. Mackenzie's own party, including one gentleman who had been only made a Senator a few weeks before upon his nomination. It is difficult to believe that if the Ministry had been in

earnest they could not have carried the measure through both Houses of the Canadian Parliament. Their recent offer of $750,000 to British Columbia in lieu of the Carnarvon compromise must convince us, if there were no other evidence, of the fact that they never meant to carry out that bargain—that they have been only paltering with their engagements to the Imperial Government and to the Province. It is absurd to suppose that British Columbia can accept such a sum as payment in full of all her claims. We cannot wonder that there is a very great discontent throughout the Province—a discontent which it has been beyond even Lord Dufferin's powers of diplomacy to allay. We must still hope that the Canadian Government will be induced to review its conduct in regard to this transaction, and we cannot doubt that what influence the Imperial Government possesses will be brought to bear in order that justice may be done between the Dominion and the Province of British Columbia.

CANADA AND BRITISH COLUMBIA.

(*From the London Saturday Review.*)

If Lord Dufferin fails in his efforts to adjust the dispute between Canada and British Columbia, the difficulty may be regarded as insoluble. With the authority and dignity of high office he combines as fully as any living statesman diplomatic and official experience, tact, temper, and sound practical judgment. He will offend no prejudices, he will make allowance for personal and local susceptibilities, and if he cannot overcome unavoidable obstacles, he will not create artificial impediments to the success of his voluntary mission. Nevertheless it is but too probable that he will find compromise or settlement impracticable. It is a grave disadvantage to a negotiator to know that his principals are in the wrong, and an arbitrator is embarrassed by inability to rely on the performance by either party of the conditions of an award. The representative of the Crown will command a certain respect, but the uncertain and elastic state of colonial sentiment renders every interference on behalf of the Imperial Government difficult and possibly ineffective. The loyalty of Canada is accompanied by an unvarying resolution on the part of the colonists to have their own way, as often as any difference occurs. The present case is further complicated by the provincial relation of British Columbia to Canada. The quarrel affects the validity of the union which was but recently with much difficulty accomplished. The re-

mote settlement on the Pacific coast long hesitated to join the Dominion; and its assent was only granted on definite terms. Sir John Macdonald and his colleagues undertook, on behalf of the Canadian Government, to complete within a limited time a railway to connect the Eastern and Western Provinces. The enterprise was suggested by the example of the United States in constructing the Pacific Railway which now extends from the Atlantic coast to San Francisco. The Canadian Government perhaps scarcely gave sufficient consideration to the inferiority of colonial resources, to the thinness of population on the proposed route, and to the severe climate of the North. Even the American Pacific Railway has hitherto failed as a speculation, though it is both politically and commercially advantageous to the Union. The construction of the railway was attended by numerous pecuniary scandals; and the line might figuratively be said to be ballasted with broken reputations. In this respect, if in no other, it was easy for Canada to imitate a bad example.

The English Government, feeling a strong and legitimate desire for the Union of all the North American Provinces, undertook to guarantee a loan for a portion of the necessary expenditure. One of the principal capitalists of Canada was employed in financial negotiations in London; and, unfortunately, the Canadian Prime Minister and some of his colleagues became personally compromised in the transactions of their agent. It was found impossible to raise the large sum which would have been required for the construction of the railway; and the disclosure of some irregular bargains with the contractor led to the retirement of Sir John Macdonald and his Ministry from office. His successor, Mr. Mackenzie, had opposed the project of the railway; the incoming Government soon announced its intention of abandoning the enterprise. A distinct breach of contract with British Columbia could only be excused by the impossibility of completing the bargain. The Province was naturally slow to admit the necessity of incurring serious disappointment; but, after long negotiation, Lord Carnarvon induced British Columbia to acquiesce in an alternative and less advantageous plan. The Canadian Government, in consideration of a release from the obligation of making the railroad, agreed to make a waggon road for a part of the distance, and to construct a considerable extent of railroad within the Province. The second arrangement has now shared the fate of the first, although the Canadian House of Commons voted the necessary supplies. The bill was, apparently with the connivance of the Ministers, lost in the Council; and now a third offer is made of a lump sum of a quarter of a million in satisfaction of all the claims of the Province. There is no security that the damages tendered will be paid; and, although a money compromise would perhaps not be expedient, the Legislature and Government of British Columbia regard the Canadian offer as wholly inadequate. They allege that the railway which the Government of the Dominion undertook to construct would have cost several millions; and that the expenditure of large sums on labor would have been immediately advantageous to the district. In default of a more liberal arrangement, British Columbia claims to be released from the federal connection to which it had assented. The conditions of the original bargain have evidently been violated, and the contention that the contract is void is therefore plausible, if not convincing.

According to the analogy of English law, a court would probably hold that the union was irrevocable, and that the Canadian Government was bound either to comply with the terms of the contract or to make full compensation for failure; but English colonies are almost equally independent with sovereign States of coercive jurisdiction. Lord Dufferin's task is rather diplomatic than judicial, inasmuch as it is necessary that both parties should concur in any valid settlement. British Columbia cannot compel Canada to do justice; and, on the other hand, the Government of the Dominion has no means of enforcing the maintenance of the federal relation. It is alleged, perhaps on insufficient grounds that the settlers of Upper Canada are not anxious to facilitate by the construction of roads or railways the passage of European immigrants to the rich lands of the Pacific coast; but their experience of the competition of the Western States ought to have shown the impossibility of stopping immigrants on their way to a chosen place of settlement. The French of Lower Canada are supposed to dislike an increase of the English and Protestant population; but as long as the Eastern Provinces are only sprinkled with settlers, it seems unreasonable to cultivate a jealousy of the remote districts on the Pacific. It must be obvious to intelligent colonists that in proportion to its economical advantages, British Columbia will increase in prosperity and population with the aid either of Canada or the United States. Patriotism would suggest the expediency of cultivating the connexion which is one of the conditions of the future national greatness of Canada; but it is not sufficiently active to prevail over petty motives and calculations.

It is for the English Cabinet to determine, if the case unfortunately arises, whether the consent of the Crown shall be given to the withdrawal of British Columbia from the union with Canada; but the decision of a difficult and dangerous question ought, if possible, to be evaded. Even if the Canadians were previously indifferent to the maintenance of the present connection, they would find a grievance in the infringement of the integrity of the Dominion. On the other hand, neither England or Canada nor both together could prevent the secession of British Columbia, either from the Dominion or from the Empire. According to the well established policy of England, the colonies are only retained as long as the connection is voluntary. It would be absurd, if it were not impossible, to employ for the maintenance of the unity of the Canadian Dominion means which have been by anticipation renounced as inapplicable to the assertion of the integrity of the Empire. The independence of British Columbia would be followed after no long interval by annexation to the American Union; nor would there be any ground for resenting an arrangement between two foreign communities. If Lord Dufferin fails to satisfy the inhabitants of the Province, he may probably be able to secure a reasonable delay before the adoption of any irrevocable measure. On his return to Ottawa he will have to conduct a negotiation with his own advisers, who still command the Parliamentary majority by which they have been kept in power three years. It may be a question whether their popularity would not be endangered by any display of indifference to the risk of mutilating the Dominion. Sir John Macdonald was supported by the Parliament of his day when he engaged to pay a high price for the adhesion of British Columbia to the Union. The same reasons which

then recommended his policy may still influence colonial opinion. Since the establishment of the novel system of responsible government, the duties of a Colonial Governor have changed their character. While an Indian Viceroy or a Governor of a Crown Colony is charged mainly with administrative functions, a Governor-General of Canada, or the holder of a similar office in Australia, is something between a constitutional King and a resident Ambassador. Lord Dufferin has at all times to keep his own Parliament and his Ministers in good humor; and on on occasions like the present he finds it necessary to patch up their blunders. His prospects of success in the pending negotiation are not encouraging.

THE ENGLISH PRESS ON LORD DUFFERIN'S SPEECH.

(*From the London Standard, October 17th*, 1876)

The Earl of Dufferin is a very able man and an eloquent speaker, who in his important office as Governor-General of Canada, has more than once done good service to the Empire. If his recent visit to the Province of British Columbia has been less successful than some of his former expeditions to distant parts of the Dominion, it must be admitted that the task which Lord Dufferin had undertaken was one of peculiar difficulty. He had to appear before the people of British Columbia as the representative not only of the Imperial but of the Dominion Government, and in attempting to sustain the double character of an agent of the Crown and the head of an independent constitutional system—functions never easily reconciled, but rarely so irreconcilable as at the moment of his visit, it is no wonder that even so adroit and experienced a diplomatist should *have failed*. In spite of the flatteries so judiciously administered to the self-love of the Province—a form of attention to which young communities are particularly susceptible—the Governor-General *does not appear to have accomplished* that which we may presume to have been the object of his mission----namely, to obtain the consent of the British Columbians to the latest of Mr. Mackenzie's many proposals to evade the Canadian bargain with British Columbia. In vain did Lord Dufferin tax all his powers of pleasing; in vain did he compliment the colony on its great resources and its amazing loyalty----upon the idyllic beauty of its scenery, upon its admirable water ways and

harbors, upon its stalwart men and comely maidens, upon its wealth of gold and silver, and its timber so suitable for the largest sized spars. In vain did he wind up his glowing pictures of the treasures of British Columbia by declaring it "a glorious Province----a Province which Canada should be proud to possess, and whose association with the Dominion she ought to regard as the crowning triumph of Federation." Up to this point Lord Dufferin's hearers were probably perfectly well able to agree with him. They never doubted that they are something which Canada should be proud to possess. They have been accustomed to regard their union with the Dominion as the crown of the Federal edifice. If they have complained of anything it is that Canada is not so proud as she should be of this possession----that she has not exhibited that sense of the stability of the Federal fabric which might have been desirable in the interests of its crown.

Although he took special pains to disavow being the bearer of any message, either from the Imperial or the Dominion Government, Lord Dufferin did, in fact, devote the principal portion of his speech to an elaborate exculpation of the Mackenzie Government from the charge of having failed in its duty to British Columbia. That was a sufficiently delicate mission for a Governor-General of Canada to be engaged in, for it was impossible that he could refer to the subject without investing himself with more or less of a diplomatic character. Such a character Lord Dufferin assumed before the citizens of Victoria, nor does he or they seem to have been aware that such an assumption was at all alien to his office or derogatory from his position. Declaring that he had come charged with a mission to testify by his presence that "the entire people of Canada, without distinction of party, are most sincerely desirous of cultivating with the people of British Columbia those friendly and affectionate relations upon the existence of which must depend the future harmony of the Dominion," Lord Dufferin went into a minute history of the transactions connected with the Pacific Railway to prove that the present Canadian Government has behaved with strict fidelity to its engagements. That was a bold thesis for the representative of the Imperial Government to maintain before the assembled citizens of British Columbia, seeing that the matter which Lord Dufferin had to press upon their favorable notice was the compromise of a compromise----the offer, in fact, of an insolvent Government to pay something like eighteen pence in the pound to a judgment creditor. Lord Dufferin performed his task with great intrepidity. Without denying that British Columbia has suffered in many ways from the breach of the treaty of Confederation with Canada, that her entrance into the Dominion was made conditionally on certain things being done which have not been done, or even begun to be done, Lord Dufferin essayed to defend the Dominion Government, and especially Mr. Mackenzie, its Prime Minister, against the charge of having wilfully broken this bargain. The argument is one with which we have been familiar from the mouths of the accredited organs of the Canadian "Grit" party. In the first place, Lord Dufferin contends that the bargain was entered into without due consideration, at a time when Canada was more prosperous and enterprising than she is now. In 1871 her

finances were flourishing, and her imagination flushed by the development of her great domain in the Northwest. Stimulated by the success of the line from New York to San Francisco, and believing that there was no more obstacles to a trans-continental railway on British than on American soil, Canada undertook to commence the Pacific line within two years of the date of the union with British Columbia, and to complete it in ten. Lord Dufferin repeats Mr. Mackenzie's words, uttered shortly after that gentleman's accession to office upon the downfall of the Macdonald Adnistration, to the effect that in doing this she "pledged herself to what was a physical impossibility." Being impossible, the performance, Lord Dufferin argues, ought not to be exacted from Canada. He ingeniously endeavors to throw part of the blame of the default upon British Columbia herself, by pleading that the mountains which impeded the enterprise were "their mountains, and in their own territory." For this reason Lord Dufferin holds that the British Columbians are not without responsibility for the failure of the pledge made to them. However, we may pass over this stage of the transaction. Influenced, doubtless, by the consciousness of this misbehavior of her mountains, British Columbia consented to forego the literal fulfilment of the original bargain. Then followed "a painful period" of delay and "frixtion," which Lord Dufferin passes over lightly; till he comes to what he calls "the new era," when, under the auspices of Lord Carnarvon, a compromise was arrived at between the Province and the Dominion. The substance of the terms embodied in this compromise, Lord Dufferin claims to be Mr. Mackenzie's own; it was he who suggested the Nanaimo and Esquimalt Railway, the telegraph line, the waggon road, and the annual expenditure. Lord Carnarvon was only the arbitrator between the two contending parties, and was not the inventor of the scheme which goes by his name. This, which Lord Carnarvon seems to put forward as an additional argument in support of Mr. Mackenzie's good faith, probably appeared to the citizens of Victoria a somewhat eccentric mode of removing their discontent with the Dominion Government. Had there been any pretext for saying that Lord Carnarvon was the proposer of the terms of the compromise there might have been some excuse for Mr. Mackenzie; but when it is Mr. Mackenzie's own scheme, the fulfilment of which his Government has evaded, what wonder that there should be that irritation and those embittered feelings on which Lord Dufferin had to comment!

The case cannot be put more forcibly than by Lord Dufferin himself against the Dominion Government: "Two years have passed since the Canadian Government undertook to commence the construction of the Esquimalt and Nanaimo Raiiway, and the Eesquimalt and Nanaimo Railway is not even commenced, and, what is more, there is not the remotest prospect of its being commenced." Thus, for the second time has Canada broken faith with her neighbor. The only consolation which Lord Dufferin has to offer us is that Mr. Mackenzie has not been guilty of any base or deceitful conduct, and that the western mountains were "as full of theodolites and surveyors as they could hold." We fear this will convey such scant satisfaction to the British Columbians, who are not so much concerned to know whether Mr. Mackenzie violated his bargain in good faith or bad faith as interested in learning that the bargain is violated, and according to Lord Dufferin's own con-

fession, will never be carried out. Here it is not so much that the thing is physically impossible as that Canada does not hold it to be desirable. Mr. Mackenzie is full of the very best intentions, but though he is at the head of the most powerful party in the Dominion, and presumably has the confidence of both Houses of Parliament, he cannot unfortunately get the Upper House to pass his British Columbia scheme. In this predicament he has been compelled once more to offer a compensation to the creditors of the Dominion, proposing to pay down a sum of $750,00 in lieu of the Nanaimo and Esquimalt Railway. Lord Dufferin considers this to be "the most natural solution of the problem," and the best compensation to the British Columbians for the "misadventure" which has led to the second break down in the contract. That is a matter which chiefly concerns the people of British Columbia. If they are willing once more to condone the violation of a bargain made under the sanction of the Imperial Government, and in consideration of the new terms offered, no one will have a right to quarrel with them. But we cannot take leave of the subject without saying that Lord Dufferin has scarcely done justice either to himself or to his office by appearing before the people of British Columbia as a broker on behalf of the Mackenzie Government. His duty to the Crown must be regarded as superior to any which he owes to his own Ministry; and whatever he might feel impelled to do or to say, with the object of retaining the people of British Columbia in their loyalty, or of recommending to them any measure emanating from the Imperial Government, certainly it was no part of his business to negotiate a bargain between the Dominion Government and one of its constitutent provinces, still less to appear as the advocate and apologist of his own Ministry.